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## Montana Speech - Language - Hearing Association

*...Improving communication for life*

March 11, 2013

Re: Bill No: SB230

Sponsor: David Wanzenried

Short Title: Revise laws governing board of speech-language pathologists and audiologists

Committee: Human Services Committee

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To: The House Human Services Committee

From: Al Yonovitz, PhD, CCC-A, FAAA, MAudSA (CP)

President: Montana Speech-Language-Hearing Association

**I submit to this committee the following regarding the representation of speech-language pathologists and audiologists in support of this bill:**

- 1) This bill was based upon my regular attendance at the Montana Board of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists (MBSLPA). At these board meetings, continuous public and scheduled comment was given by many on the need to offer speech-language services and hearing services with the use of telepractice.
- 2) The Board (MBSLPA) determined that a bill should be authored and submitted to the Montana Legislature for this current session.
- 3) At the most recent board meeting of the MBSLPA, it was decided to support SB230.



- 4) The Montana Speech-Language-Hearing Association (MSHA), established in 1957, had discussed the submission of this bill. A referendum of membership was conducted at the October, 2012 convention of MSHA and a unanimous vote was in concurrence for establishing a telepractice bill.
- 5) The Board of MSHA on October 17, 2012 passed a resolution to support a bill on telepractice in this legislative session. This was further discussed at the Annual Business Meeting of MSHA on October 18, 2012.

**I submit to this committee the following regarding the scientific merit of this bill.**

- 1) The use of telepractice is supported by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (membership > 150,000). Based upon evidence-based studies in telepractice, it has been shown to be an effective means of producing very successful clinical outcomes for patients.

**I submit to this committee the following regarding the benefits to Montana residents.**

- 1) The technology that is now available will allow countless patients to gain communication. Patients, both children and adults, without communication and normal cognitive abilities, will now more rapidly achieve success. Intensive and consistent therapy will reach people in rural and remote locations in Montana. Patients with transportation difficulties and those who are difficult to transport will greatly benefit from speech and hearing therapy via telepractice.